

As a volunteer on Hillary Clinton's successful campaign for Senator in 2000, and at Congresswoman LOUISE SLAUGHTER's campaign headquarters in 2001, Sam worked tirelessly. In 2005 he hopped on board Legislator Michele Iannello's campaign. Following her victory, Sam went to work for Legislator Iannello in her district office for 2006 and 2007. In 2008, he went to work for the Erie County Board of Elections and retired again in June, 2016.

Sam is the loving father of Sam James Scinta and daughter-in-law Kerry, and a proud grandfather to Sam Jr. and Anthony. As a proud family man, while Sam's son was young, Sam coached and served as President of the Little League at Public School 81 in the 1970's.

Mr. Speaker, I honor Mr. Sam Scinta and his dedication to Democratic politics and our community. Sam's commitment and dependability are admirable and I am pleased to be able to recognize him today with the City of Tonawanda Democratic Committee as they present to him their Man of the Year Award.

#### PERSONAL EXPLANATION

#### HON. SCOTT TAYLOR

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, March 6, 2017*

Mr. TAYLOR. Mr. Speaker, due to travel with President Trump, I was unable to attend votes. Had I been present, I would have voted nay on Roll Call No. 122, yea on Roll Call No. 123, nay on Roll Call No. 124, nay on Roll Call No. 125, and yea on Roll Call No. 126.

#### IN RECOGNITION OF THE WHISNANTS

#### HON. MARK MEADOWS

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, March 6, 2017*

Mr. MEADOWS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize The Whisnants, a musical ensemble from Morganton, North Carolina. On behalf of the people of Western North Carolina, I would like to congratulate The Whisnants for nearly 50 years of the continued growth of their remarkable ministry.

This ministry began many years ago in 1970, when John and Betty Whisnant and their family began singing gospel music in Morganton, North Carolina. The group has expanded over the years, with members coming and going, but they have always remained true to their mission. This family has asked God to use their ministry to touch more and more lives, and he has clearly used their music to do so. In the 47 years since they got their start, the Whisnants have performed across the nation and the world. The Whisnants have been recognized as leaders in gospel music, and their songs have frequently been awarded top accolades throughout their career.

As the family's ministry continues to grow and as new generations of Whisnants take new roles, they do so with my prayers and continued best wishes. The Whisnants have been extraordinary representatives of our

community across our state and nation. On behalf of the people of Western North Carolina, it's my honor to recognize them on this important family milestone.

#### PERSONAL EXPLANATION

#### HON. ZOE LOFGREN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, March 6, 2017*

Ms. LOFGREN. Mr. Speaker, I was unable to cast votes on Monday February 27, 2017 due to a family medical emergency. Had I been present I would have voted: Roll Call No. 100: YEA, Roll Call No. 101: NO, and Roll Call No. 102: YEA.

#### HONORING GAYLE SYPOSS FOR HER DEDICATED SERVICE TO THE COMMUNITY

#### HON. BRIAN HIGGINS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, March 6, 2017*

Mr. HIGGINS of New York. Mr. Speaker, my hometown county Democratic committee gathered recently to honor the longtime chair of the City of Tonawanda Democratic committee, Gayle Syposs, to commemorate her service both to her community and to the Democratic Party.

A career public servant, Gayle has in the past served as an elected member of her hometown city council, as a civil servant and appointed public servant in county government, and at present once again serving her hometown as the Tonawanda City Clerk, where its elected leadership—be they Republican or Democratically affiliated—agree that her experience and institutional knowledge was critically important when the longtime incumbent city clerk retired in 2015.

But it is how Gayle came to public life that helps illustrate what is great about America, and about how committed people, working together, can be an effective voice for the communities they love.

In the 1970s, New York State government had plans to "improve" transportation in the city of Tonawanda—but the local community didn't think much of it. The state wanted to change Niagara Street into a four lane highway, which would have turned this main thoroughfare adjacent to the city's waterfront parks into a dangerous highway totally not in keeping with the needs and wants of city residents, destroying the city's character in the process.

This ill-conceived action midwifed the birth of a great civic and political activist in Gayle Syposs. After reading a newspaper article detailing the number of old-growth trees destined to be removed to build this highway, Gayle formed a citizens' committee that successfully fought the state's top-down plan, preserving Niagara Street and the character of her hometown the right way, in a grassroots, bottom-up fashion, energizing and educating neighbors to join the fight.

Today, Niagara Street remains as it was, a low-speed thoroughfare adjacent to county and city parks, preserved, we hope, in per-

petuity for the enjoyment of residents and families during each of Western New York's great four seasons. Gayle's activism spawned a career in public service and politics, leading her to 6 non-consecutive terms on the city council, and into greater governmental and political activism—something from which so many Western New York Democrats have benefited.

Indeed, while I have known Gayle for the better part of thirty years, I have come to benefit most directly since her city was included into my congressional district in 2012. In addition to being a steadfast supporter, Gayle has been a friend and an important link for me and for my staff to her local community—a service she has been kind enough to provide to me and to the people I work to serve.

Gayle is, as I mentioned, currently the chair of the city of Tonawanda's Democratic Committee, but that is only one of many titles she has held. While she has served as chair as long as many of us can remember, she also serves as Chair of the Erie County Association of Town Chairs, as Treasurer of the county Democratic party, and as a member of the New York State Democratic Committee.

A few weeks ago, Gayle was honored by our Erie County Democratic Committee as the 2017 recipient of the Joseph F. Crangle Legacy Award. Named for our legendary former county and state chairman, this award is the gold standard for local Democrats; it rightfully raises Gayle's name among the great leaders of our party.

But no one should imagine that earning this award will mean that Gayle will slow down anytime soon. Gayle will likely read this speech, reflect upon it for a few moments, and quickly move on to a call she recently received about a broken sidewalk, or pass along the résumé of a neighbor's college-aged grandson who is looking for an opportunity as he works his way through college. Gayle's dedication to her country, her community and, yes, her party, represent all that is great about Western New York, and I am thankful for the opportunity to honor her and to have the House take note of the many positive contributions she has made throughout our community.

#### HONORING MS. AILEEN CLARKE HERNANDEZ

#### HON. BARBARA LEE

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Monday, March 6, 2017*

Ms. LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the extraordinary life of Aileen Clarke Hernandez. With her passing on February 13, 2017 in Irvine, California, I look to recognize her passion for women's equality, and the invaluable influence it has had on our nation.

Aileen was born in Brooklyn on May 23, 1926, to Charles Henry Clarke, and Ethel Louise Hall. Ms. Hernandez excelled in school and graduated magna cum laude from Howard University, where she was drawn into politics and worked with the NAACP. In 1951, she took an organizing job with the West Coast division of the International Ladies Garment Workers Union.

Her work with the Garment Workers Union brought her to California, and led to her involvement in California politics and government, where she eventually was appointed as

the assistant chief of the Fair Employment Practices Division for the State.

In 1964, Clarke was appointed by President Lyndon B. Johnson, as the first woman to serve on the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC), and in 1966, she left the commission to form her own consulting firm, Hernandez and Associates. Her firm worked to end racism, sexism and all forms of discrimination, and to establish standards for equity in government and corporations.

In 1970 she was appointed the second President of the National Organization for Women (NOW) where she was instrumental in organizing the national Women's Strike for Equality on August 26, 1970.

In 1973, Ms. Clarke took initiative and founded Black Women Organized for Action in San Francisco. In addition, Ms. Clarke was the Co-Chair and Founder with Marilyn Fowler, of the California Women's Agenda, a network and action alliance of over 600 organizations in California, and was chairwoman of the committee that led to the founding of the National Women's Political Caucus that worked to increase political power for women.

Aileen Clarke Hernandez was a leader and fought against discrimination for more than seven decades. She took it as her mission to ensure a voice for women of color in the women's movement and civil rights movement, and worked on behalf of all people seeking social justice. Her monumental efforts have guided our nation on the right trajectory toward a more just society.

On a personal note, I met Aileen in 1972 during Shirley Chisholm's groundbreaking presidential campaign. She became a mentor and helped shape my political views and guided my growing political involvement. I was constantly amazed at how she could build bridges between activists in the feminist movement, people of color, and the civil rights movement, in order to work together for positive change. I was proud to call Aileen my friend; I know that her legacy will live on, and her spirit will continue to guide us through the many challenges that we continue to face.

Today, California's 13th Congressional District honors Aileen Hernandez's memory and her lifetime of service working on behalf of social justice and equality. We join her loved ones in celebrating her incredible life with a promise to honor her tremendous legacy.

REMEMBERING MAJOR REID B. NANNEN, UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS

### HON. DARIN LAHOOD

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 6, 2017

Mr. LAHOOD. Mr. Speaker, today, I would like to honor United States Marine Corps Major Reid B. Nannen, who passed away Sunday, March 1, 2014, while training at TOPGUN NAS in Fallon, Nevada.

Reid attended Olympia High School where he was a two-year captain of the swim team, a section leader for the drum line, and an Illinois State Scholar. Reid then attended the University of Illinois where he participated in the Marching Illini Drum Line, and also served as commander of the NROTC Drill Team his senior year. After graduating, Reid married the

love of his life, Sarah M. Simpson, on August 6, 2005, in Peoria, Illinois.

Reid was commissioned as a 2nd Lieutenant in May 2004. After completing The Basic School, Reid attended Naval Aviation Training and received his Wings of Gold in February 2007. He deployed to Afghanistan in support of Operation Enduring Freedom from May to December of 2010. Reid attended Tactical Air Control Party training in 2011 and proceeded to Camp Pendleton, California, for duty as a forward air controller. Reid deployed for the second time to Afghanistan from October of 2011 to May of 2012. Reid's valor and leadership led him to serve as a decorated hero receiving the Afghanistan Campaign Medal, Navy Unit Commendation, Navy Achievement Medal, and the Navy Commendation Medal and Air Medal.

In honor of Reid's sacrifice, it is my privilege to commemorate his service through the designation of the Major Reid B. Nannen Highway in Hopedale, Illinois. My prayers and thoughts go out to his wife, Sarah, and their four children, who have lost a loving husband and father. Our Nation is blessed to have servicemen like Captain Reid who have selflessly given their life in defense of our country and our freedom.

### HONORING ST. PAUL'S EPISCOPAL CATHEDRAL

### HON. BRIAN HIGGINS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 6, 2017

Mr. HIGGINS of New York. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the rich history of St Paul's Episcopal Cathedral, a long standing community pillar that is celebrating its 200th anniversary this year.

The Episcopal Cathedral was incorporated on February 10, 1817 in the city of Buffalo. This building was Buffalo's first permanent house of worship and was consecrated on February 25, 1821.

A major milestone in the Church's history was the consecration of a new edifice. This building was designed by renowned architect Richard Upjohn and began a second period of growth for the Church.

St Paul's Cathedral flourished in the city until May 22, 1888 when it was tragically destroyed by a fire. Through perseverance and a strong commitment to the community, the restored St Paul's Cathedral was inaugurated just two years later.

The Church committed to remaining in the downtown community of Buffalo. Even with the hardships of the twentieth century around the country and in Buffalo, St Paul's Cathedral took advantage of every opportunity to grow and serve the community.

St Paul's Cathedral is where The Most Rev. Michael Bruce Curry, Presiding Bishop and Primate of The Episcopal Church, attended while he was going through Buffalo Public Schools.

Through different projects throughout the city of Buffalo, the people of St Paul's Cathedral have shown their commitment to social service and preserving their history.

Mr. Speaker, I honor a long standing institution in the city of Buffalo. I am proud to celebrate St Paul's Episcopal Cathedral's bicen-

tennial and I wish the Church good fortune for many years to come.

### INTRODUCTION OF THE ANIMAL WELFARE ACCOUNTABILITY AND TRANSPARENCY ACT

### HON. EARL BLUMENAUER

OF OREGON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 6, 2017

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, early last month, the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) abruptly pulled animal welfare violation documents from its website. This database contained thousands of inspection reports and other information about violations of the Animal Welfare Act and the Horse Protection Act made by research laboratories, zoos, dog breeding operations, and other facilities. While the agency has begun to repost some of these documents, it has so far only restored a small fraction of the information that was taken down. In the meantime, consumers and animal welfare advocates lack the transparency needed to make informed decisions and hold violators accountable.

For the life of me, I can't understand why USDA would hide this vital information. Ensuring transparency under these laws is a no-brainer. Luckily, many of my colleagues feel the same. Today, I am pleased to introduce, with 34 of my colleagues, the Animal Welfare Accountability and Transparency Act. This bill would require USDA to repost this information on its website and would increase accountability for those who treat animals inhumanely.

Providing consumers with information about where their pets come from and how animals are treated is the least we can do to discourage people from violating the law. It is critical that we ensure the standards set forth by Animal Welfare Act and the Horse Protection Act are upheld. This is why the Animal Welfare Accountability and Transparency Act would create an additional incentive to abide by these laws.

The bill would take away certain tax benefits for businesses that are found to be in violation of those laws. Under current tax rules, the costs of breeding and working animals are treated the same as machinery and equipment, and businesses may deduct these costs from their taxes over a specified period. The bill would prohibit businesses found to have violated the Animal Welfare Act or the Horse Protection Act from claiming these accelerated depreciation bonuses for tax purposes.

I am also happy to have worked with my colleague from Oregon, Senator RON WYDEN, who introduced a Senate version of this legislation late last week. This bill is a small step that this Congress can take quickly to show that we respond to animal abuse and that the federal government should be transparent with consumers. I call on my colleagues to support this bill so that we can send a strong message to animal abusers across this country that their horrendous actions will not be kept in the shadows.